Gary L. Underwood, 59, is Vice President, Chief Technology Officer and co-owner of Red Arrow Products Company LLC in Manitowoc, Wisconsin, where he is responsible for all aspects of new product development, product applications and quality control.

Born and raised in Belleville, Illinois, Gary attended the University of Missouri at Rolla where he graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Chemistry with Life Sciences Preference in 1975. After graduate studies in Food Science at the University of Missouri at Columbia, Gary took a position with Red Arrow Products Company, Inc., in 1977.
Dr. Clifford Hollenbeck originally patented a process of producing smoke flavoring through pyrolyzing hardwood sawdust and capturing the wood smoke in a water solution. He founded Red Arrow Products Company named in honor of the 32nd Infantry Brigade made up of soldiers from Michigan and Wisconsin to commercialize the process. Red Arrow is now the world's largest producer and marketer of liquid smoke products. For his pioneering work, Dr. Hollenbeck was elected to the Wisconsin Meat Hall of Fame in 1997.

Gary joined Red Arrow as senior food chemist where he has continued building on Dr. Hollenbeck’s legacy. He was promoted first to research manager in 1979 then to his current vice president position in 1989. He is the creator of the next generations of technical advancements in liquid smoke production, processes and formulations that have enabled Red Arrow to expand and to develop truly customized smoke flavoring products for a wide variety of special needs within the meat industry. His leadership has brought national and international recognition to Red Arrow and its natural smoke condensate product line.

Gary’s first patent in 1980 was for brine injectable smoke flavoring. He now is an inventor of 15 patents relating to the pyrolysis of wood and other carbohydrates, flavoring and coloring preparations of pyrolysis liquids and their applications to food products. Working with Canadian colleagues, he developed and implemented an entirely new fast pyrolysis method of converting wood to high browning smoke flavorings. Another particularly notable patented development is Maillose®, a novel browning agent that is used widely in the convenience food industry for its ability to develop a golden-brown color on food products.

In recent years, he has worked with his industry peers and European regulatory scientists in developing guidelines for the evaluation and approval of smoke flavorings in the European Union.

Gary has also served in several professional leadership roles including secretary and president of the Wisconsin Section of the Institute of Food Technology. His community service has included the presidency of the local village where he and his family resided their first nine years in Wisconsin, a United Way volunteer, a city of Manitowoc Board of Health appointment and currently, a city of Manitowoc Wastewater Treatment Board appointment.

Gary and his wife of 38 years, Linda, raised a family of one son and two daughters in Manitowoc. The extended family has grown to include five grandchildren, all still in Wisconsin. Gary and Linda are highly involved in their local church, Faith Church, and are active participants in traveling to and supporting mission work in remote Alaskan villages through Arctic Barnabas.

Because of Gary Underwood, Red Arrow has evolved into much more than a producer of liquid smoke condensates to become a global supplier of grill flavors, browning agents and process flavors to the meat and food industries worldwide, shipping to over 60 countries from their Wisconsin headquarters.